

# Upton News



November 2021

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I would like to put on record thanks to Mike Brown for his dedicated service in producing 115 editions of the Upton News - Mike, the village is truly grateful.

I hope that the change in editorship will be seamless for readers and that I will be able to pass it on to someone else in due course in as healthy a state as it is today. However, the Upton News is only as good as those who contribute to it so please make this the first port of call if you have anything to communicate to the wider community.

For those submitting news items will you please send them to me at [neilthorp@btinternet.com](mailto:neilthorp@btinternet.com). A few days beforehand I will send a reminder of the deadline day to all regular contributors but early submission will always be welcome. Anything received past the deadline of 28th of the month may NOT be included.

*Neil Thorp*

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## Church Services

### Online Services

Sundays at 10.30am - login or connect at 10am to chat before the service.

Weekday evenings - Compline at 8pm

Please see the Churn for the service access codes and full details of how to join each week. If you would like to be added to our weekly mailing list, please contact Elaine.

Services at St. Mary the Virgin

14 November, REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY 10.30, Parish Remembrance Service

28 November, 1<sup>st</sup> SUNDAY OF ADVENT 09.30, Parish Eucharist

Bookings for Weddings, Baptisms etc. may be made by contacting the office via email.

Revd Jason St. John Nicolle: 01235 850267, [office@churnchurches.co.uk](mailto:office@churnchurches.co.uk)

Revd Louise Butler: 07837 009730 [revlouiseb@aol.co](mailto:revlouiseb@aol.co)

Elaine de Ridder: 01235 850267 [office@churnchurches.co.uk](mailto:office@churnchurches.co.uk)

The Benefice Operations Manager, Elaine de Ridder, is in the office from 9.00am - 2.30pm Monday to Friday.

## BENEFICE ADVENT CAROL SERVICE

1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Advent - 28<sup>th</sup> November, 6pm

St Michael's Blewbury

ALL WELCOME TO THE SERVICE!



This is also your invitation to join the Benefice Choir as we learn the music, both traditional and contemporary, for this service. Practices are Monday evenings from 6.45 - 7.45pm at St Michael's Church, Blewbury. Please come along and join us - no experience necessary, you just need to enjoy singing!

Any questions, please contact Elaine in the Benefice Office.

## ACTIVE ANGELS

Our MU pram Service team invite families to this monthly event; with songs, story, games, activity and prayer. **12 noon on Wednesday 3rd November at St. Michael's, Blewbury.**

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## Parish Council

Upton Parish Council is in the process of finalising its budget for 2022/23. There are many areas which need to be maintained and although the Parish Council is not necessarily responsible for all areas, it is clear that some parts are not being maintained and this means engaging others to carry out the work. This includes:-

Footpaths and bridleways clearing

Adventure Play Area repairs/renovation

Installing fences - to the rear of the recreation ground & around the play areas.

This will all take careful financial planning, applying for grants where available, engaging contractors as appropriate and relying on volunteers who continue to do their bit for the benefit of the village and its residents.

As always if you'd like to help either as a volunteer or by joining the Parish Council, please let the Clerk know on [parish.clerk@uptonvillage.co.uk](mailto:parish.clerk@uptonvillage.co.uk).

The next Parish Council meeting is scheduled for Tuesday 16th November at 7.30pm in the village hall.'

## District Council

Monthly Parish Update Vale of White Horse District Councillors Cllr Hayleigh Gascoigne and Cllr Sarah Medley

We use these monthly updates to keep you updated on our activities, general council news and any COVID-19 developments. We also post regularly on our councillor Facebook Page: [Cllrs Hayleigh Gascoigne and Sarah Medley](#) - please do not hesitate to get in touch with any issues or concerns, either via Facebook message or email:

[hayleigh.gascoigne@whitehorsedc.gov.uk](mailto:hayleigh.gascoigne@whitehorsedc.gov.uk) and

[sarah.medley@whitehorsedc.gov.uk](mailto:sarah.medley@whitehorsedc.gov.uk).

### COVID-19 Community Support

A reminder to all residents that the councils' Community Support Hub continues to operate for anyone who needs any assistance, either as a result of COVID-19 or just for anyone who needs signposting towards the appropriate support channel. There are multiple ways to get in touch with the Community Support Hub:

Call: 01235 422 600 Monday to Thursday 8.30-5pm and Fridays 8.30-4.30pm

Email: [communitysupport@southandvale.gov.uk](mailto:communitysupport@southandvale.gov.uk)

Online Form: [www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/communityhub](http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/communityhub)

Website [www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/covid19](http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/covid19)

Residents can also contact:

Citizens Advice - 0808 278 7907

Vale Community Impact - 01235 765348

Remember that the latest figures are updated on the county council's interactive dashboard on a daily basis. The national change in rules on self-isolation for fully vaccinated people took effect on 16 August. We encourage residents to get tested regularly and, if they feel unwell, book a PCR test, as Covid-19 is still very much around.

### Garden Waste Service

The normal garden waste collection schedule in Vale will resume on 25 October and so from that day onwards, customers can put their brown garden waste bins out on their normal collection day in their recycling week every fortnight.

As mentioned last month, to make up for the disruption to the service we are extending customers' current subscription to the service by three months.

The councils are emailing and writing to their garden waste customers this week letting them know the good news.

Vale garden waste customers will also benefit from the scheduled Extra Garden Waste Week next month (week commencing 8 November) when

customers are entitled to put out one extra bin's worth of garden waste that week.

There is more information at: [whitehorsedc.gov.uk/gardenwaste](https://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/gardenwaste)

South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils

01235 422400

[www.southoxon.gov.uk](https://www.southoxon.gov.uk) | @southoxon

[www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk](https://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk) | @whitehorsedc

## Closure of recycling centres for essential maintenance

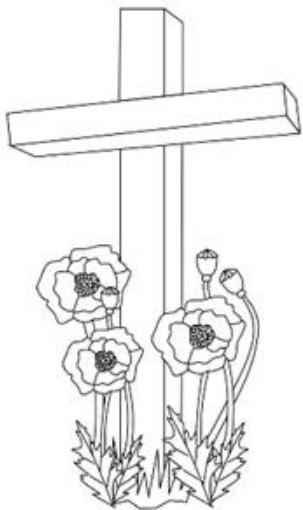
During November, our household waste recycling centres will be closing for two days to carry out a deep clean and essential maintenance to keep the sites safe, looking clean and fresh and helping to improve the customer experience when using these much-valued facilities. This includes jet washing the sites and structures, repainting lines and safety areas as well as other general works. We will be shutting each of our recycling centres for two days at a time - although never at the same time. Residents are asked to plan ahead for these closures, ideally holding on to their waste until the site reopens or if that is not possible visiting one of the neighbouring sites. We would be grateful if you could help share this message please with your constituents

Site	Dates of closure
Alkerton (Banbury)	2 and 3 November
Ardley (Bicester)	4 and 5 November
Dix Pit (Stanton Harcourt)	23 and 24 November
Drayton (Abingdon)	9 and 10 November
Oakley Wood (Wallingford)	16 and 17 November
Redbridge (Oxford)	18 and 19 November
Stanford (Faringdon)	11 and 12 November

We have scheduled the closures on quieter midweek days to minimise disruption and sites will reopen at 8am the following day. We need to close the sites for this short period for practical and safety reasons. We apologise for any inconvenience this may cause and thank residents for their understanding. Full details can be found on our website <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/waste> including details of the nearest alternative site during closures. For those residents with van or trailer permits, please note these can be used at any of our centres.

## Rector's Note

### A Thought for Remembrance



This month, many people will be attending acts of Remembrance. Men and women of all ages will gather around war memorials, wreaths will be laid, and the names of the dead will be read out. It is always a poignant time: a time to remember those men and women who gave their lives on behalf of their country, especially during the course of First and Second World Wars.

How should we honour those who gave their lives in war? The simple act of remembrance is important: it serves to remind us of the sacrifice made by the men and women of previous generations.

But I think we can also honour the fallen by committing ourselves once again to be peace-makers in our communities and in

our world. We need to do all that we possibly can to avoid using war or the threat of war as a way of solving disagreements between nations. I'm not suggesting that it's always easy to be peace-makers or peace-keepers: it isn't. Sometimes, even peace-loving nations can be presented with terrible dilemmas. What if another country threatens to attack your own country, or the country of an ally? What if they move beyond mere threat, and actually launch an attack? Might there be circumstances when going to war is the only realistic option left? And what about countries ruled by ruthless dictators? Is it possible or desirable to make peace with someone you can't trust, or someone whose values are profoundly opposed to your own?

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus told his listeners: "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God". He didn't say "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will have an easy life"; nor did he say, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be saved from complex moral dilemmas".

Nor did Jesus suggest that peace-making is for wimps, who lack the strength or courage to go to war. I think sometimes it takes as much courage and moral strength to be a peace-maker as it does to become combatant.

I think we can all do more to be peace-makers and peace-keepers in our communities and our world. Sometimes, countries have to go to war; but let us do everything in our power to live at peace with one another.

Father Jason

# **St. Mary's Vestry Improvements Appeal**

## **News Update November 2021**

The appeal to raise funds for improvements to St Mary's church in Upton was launched in July 2019. The works include extension of the vestry to provide a disabled access WC and refurbishment of the existing vestry to include catering facilities.

So far, funds raised via a combination of generous donations, grants and other sources totals over £38,000. We are very grateful to all those who have contributed to this cause.

The original cost of the proposals was estimated at £55,000 over two years ago. Inevitably, this cost has crept up and the most recent estimate, earlier this year, was £68,500.

We applied to the National Churches Trust for a grant of £20,000 but we learnt recently that this has not been successful. If the grant had been made, we were hopeful that the remaining gap of about £10,000 could be made up from a further, final appeal and smaller grants.

We have since applied for a grant from the Joseph Rank Trust, an organisation whose aims and charitable policies appear to be compatible with the objectives of our project and we expect a response early next year. At that point, we will be able to assess what further fundraising is required.

The aim of the St Mary's project is simple - to improve the facilities of the church so that it remains a cornerstone of the community for another thousand years. Fundraising takes time and patience but, with persistence, it can succeed. We have been encouraged by the example of All Saints, North Moreton, where over £150,000 was raised from a village of similar size to Upton for larger-scale, works which have proved a great benefit to the whole local community.

We hope for an encouraging outcome from the latest grant application and we'll provide a further update as soon as there's more news.

Paul Batho

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## Drop In

The village Drop In is up and running again on alternate Thursdays at 3.00pm  
It is open to all villagers so please come along if you want to have a nice  
friendly chat over a cup of tea or coffee. Please email me at  
[richmondbinov@gmail.com](mailto:richmondbinov@gmail.com) if you're interested and to find out the venue for  
the meetings which this month are on the 4th and the 18th.

*Richard Burrow*

## Village Produce Association



First of all, unfortunately, the VPA Committee has been unable to meet and we need to have a discussion and then fix the date for the Annual General Meeting. It looks as though it will take place in early December.

The date and venue will be announced in the December issue of the Upton News and Blewbury Bulletin, with a notice in Blewbury Post Office.

No sooner have we got into autumn than we're heading for winter. Winter officially starts on either the 1st December or between the 20th and 23rd December, depending on which season you consider.

The reason that there can be two 'official' start dates for winter is because the year can be split into meteorological or astronomical seasons. This explanation does help to prevent differences of opinion on the allotment!

It's amazing to see the gardens still full of colour with an abundance of flowers and how most of the trees are holding onto their leaves. The horse chestnut trees have done well with their conkers. However, I was none too happy the other day when out walking, I was attacked by a falling conker! It was still in its prickly casing which was very spiky! - so you can imagine by landing on my head it was quite painful!!

The allotment is beginning to look quite tidy and I've had to make three trips to the recycling centre to get rid of contaminated vegetation etc. We are very lucky that we can go the to tip when it suits us - some of my friends in other areas have to book a slot at their local centre. I find 8.30am during the week is a good time to find it nice and quiet at Drayton. Holly, Shallot and Borlotti are doing fine and enjoying pecking at a small pumpkin which I've grown and hung up in their run.

**DID YOU KNOW?** *James Boswell, 9th Laird of Auchinleck, a Scottish biographer, diarist and lawyer, born in Edinburgh. (1740-95) wrote: "In an orchard there should be enough to eat, enough to lay up, enough to be stolen and enough to rot on the ground."*

**BY THE WAY:** *Charles Dudley Warner (1829-1900) an American essayist, novelist and friend of Mark Twain wrote: "Everybody talks about the weather but nobody does anything about it."*

Happy Gardening - keep well

Eileen



## Astons Online

Visit our website [www.astonsonline.uk](http://www.astonsonline.uk) for free and helpful information about becoming more capable and confident using the Internet and online resources.

Free and friendly help for computer users every Tuesday morning from 10:00 to 12:00. We provide help remotely using telephone, Facetime, Skype, Zoom, Teams, WhatsApp or whatever is best for you. Book a 30 minute appointment by emailing [theastonsonline@gmail.com](mailto:theastonsonline@gmail.com) or, if this is not possible, by phoning 07780 958249.

## Obituary: Kit Maunsell MC (1939-2021)

It is with sadness that we report that Kit Maunsell died on his 82nd birthday on the 6th October. He had lived at Upton Manor, High Street for 35 years.

Kit was born in India where his father was on secondment to the Indian Political Service on October 6th 1939. He and his family returned to this country in 1944 whereupon Kit was sent to Cheltenham College. He went on to Sandhurst in 1957 and was posted to the first of his Army postings with the Gurkha Rifles in 1959. In 1960 he was posted to and joined 2/10GR Norwegian Farm Camp, Hong Kong where his rugby talent resulted in him playing at centre for Hong Kong.

Other postings were to follow including three operational tours to Borneo during one of which, when he was Company Commander, Kit was awarded the Military Cross. Kit decided to leave the army in 1968 having risen to the rank of Major (at the time he was the youngest Major in the British Army).

In 1974, after a few years working in the rag trade in Hong Kong, Kit enrolled himself for a two-year course at Cranfield Business School following which he returned to the clothing industry to work for Thomas Marshalls where he quickly rose through the ranks. In 1982 he moved to the catering industry with Letheby and Christopher as managing director and stayed with them in that role until they were taken over in 1997. From that date Kit held a mix of company directorship, including Gieves and Hawkes for ten years and he continued to invest in small publicly quoted and private companies.

It was while he was posted in Hong Kong that Kit first met Caroline whilst she was working her passage around the world. They married in 1970 and raised three lovely daughters Venetia Davidson, Chloe Tindall and Skye Veciana. The family moved from Blewbury to Upton to live in Upton Manor soon after it had been restored and saved from demolition by the previous owners. Caroline and Kit then spent a further few years continuing to renovate and improve the property.

His love of family was his first priority. He was immensely proud of his three daughters and was an active and loving grandfather until the end.

In 2003 he was an enthusiastic member of the committee that was tasked with producing an Upton Parish Plan which when published did so much to improve the social life of the village.

Kit was a huge lover of sports his favourites being Rugby, Golf, Tennis and Cricket. He personally played a lot of rugby, squash and skiing when younger. His interests in later life were reading, opera, bird watching, walking, painting, visiting Art Galleries and playing bridge with his friends and at Blewbury Bridge Club.

Kit was known as a man of strong values and great integrity. Generous, honest, straight speaking and determined. A man who lived by his principles and high expectations. Despite his successful career in both the Army and business, he remained a modest man albeit with a great sense of humour to the last.

*Mike Brown*

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## **Blewbury Post Office**

I'm sorry to mention the "C" word so soon, but the Christmas stamps have arrived, and go on sale in early November, very pretty! We are hearing reports of some hold ups to international mail, customs and excise are being very thorough in their checking of customs labels, every LARGE LETTER and PARCEL must have one, even if it's just paper, every field MUST be completed, senders address, each item in the parcel plus its weight and value in £, a £0 will not do at all, sign and date, vague descriptions won't do either, child's jumper or ladies trousers or men's shirt etc., (really sexist in my view!) not filling out the customs label properly means your parcel may be returned to you. Restrictions have changed for some countries too, check on [royalmail.com/restrictions](https://royalmail.com/restrictions) for more details.

WE are still operating the "one in/one out" system.

NO mail can be processed in the last 5 minutes of the morning session, or 15 minutes of the afternoon session.

Post early for Christmas!

Blewbury Bell Ringers post boxes will be out by the end of November in Blewbury and Upton.

love Karen, Maggie and Micheal

## Blewbury WI

In September, Blewbury WI had a most informative and enlightening talk from Mark Godaland, from Thames Valley Police, about cyber crime and keeping us as safe as possible online. He gave us a summary of his talk, which is 24 pages long, however we thought it was worthy of a mention in your newsletters, so people know how to deal with these things.

The full summary is rather long, but we can email it to you [blewburywi@gmail.com](mailto:blewburywi@gmail.com)

Make sure you have a really strong password, (3 impersonal words and a number) never share an email account, run your antivirus software every month, make sure you update your devices when prompted, set up 2 factor authorisation, and save your passwords in your browser or use a password saver app.

To 31st August 2021, 47k of scams and 94k URLs were removed from circulation, prosecutions and convictions for cyber crime have dramatically risen, so its well worth reporting all suspicious texts, emails and websites. Forward suspicious texts to 7726, forward suspicious emails to [report@phishing.gov.uk](mailto:report@phishing.gov.uk), for suspicious websites go to [NCSC.GOV.UK](https://www.ncsc.gov.uk)

More information is available on [www.ncsc.gov.uk/guidance/suspicious-email-actions](https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/guidance/suspicious-email-actions) or <http://www.actionfraud.police.uk/guidetoreporting> or contact citizens advice

Please remember that cold calls to your landline are also probably scams, block the number if you can, hang up, never give your bank details or personal information to anyone!

We are also asking for help and information about the early days of Blewbury and Upton WI, we know it was in existence in 1922 as the banner was made then, and in 1937 they had a resolution about the provision of milk to school children, discussed at the national annual meeting in London. We know they had a canning or bottling machine during WW2, but all the previous records have mysteriously disappeared, we've checked the Oxfordshire, Berkshire and the national records, so if any one can remember anything at all, please contact us at [blewburywi@gmail.com](mailto:blewburywi@gmail.com) or our secretary, Joy, on 01235 850543, Thank you.

Blewbury WI are about to take delivery of 400+ free trees from the Woodland Trust, as we are all being urged to plant a tree for the queen's platinum jubilee, Upton Village hall have already agreed to have some for their new wildlife area, but if anyone else would like 1, 2 or 20, please get in touch with Karen. (07825154842 or [blewburywi@gmail.com](mailto:blewburywi@gmail.com)) There are many different British native trees available, mainly small to medium size, wild harvest, nuts, berries, seeds and fruits for us and wildlife, all round colour and some for sustainable wood for woodburners in the future. They will need to be potted up if not being planted straight away, and come with a support and a protective sleeve.

## **Upton Nature Garden**

We're thrilled to report exciting and momentous progress towards supporting nature in our village. This weekend just past, villagers and other volunteers have planted 2500 bulbs and laid out the paths in the nature garden. This means that next spring there'll be nectar for the early emerging bees - generally queen bumbles looking for food so they can build strength to find a nesting site - and a way to walk around the garden to get a look at the flowers and who they're feeding.

So thank you to everyone who took part (all the more so if you stayed when it rained) from the toddlers to the elders, from the experts to the newbies, from the diehards to the sceptics - you made it a great community gathering and set the bar high for future volunteer events.

As it happens, our volunteer weekend was also the start of CO26 in Glasgow. Basically the last ditch attempt by the international community to arrest climate change. It's worth noting that as the deliberations kicked off we were planting up a green space that will absorb carbon as well as providing other benefits.

### **Hedging our bets**

Even though I've been devouring 'A natural history of the hedgerow' by John Wright, I still haven't fathomed why we say "hedging our bets". Is it to do with steeplechasing? Or investing in land? Please advise. What I do know is the next stage of the nature garden involves planting hedges.

Small at first, these unprepossessing stalks will develop into beautiful berry-laden, species-rammed, carbon-digesting chambers of greenfulness. Hedges, amazingly, can host thousands of species of plant, animal, lichen and fungus, and while we may not see them all, they all contribute to the ecosystem. It'll be a while before we get to serious levels of biodiversity, but the main thing is to get started.

We'll be planting wildlife-targeted hedge plants along the fence adjoining Station Road, and across the garden near the seating area. These hedges will provide habitat for pollinators and birds. The border with the rec stretching from the village hall to the fence adjoining Beeching Close will be planted with 'edible' hedging - plants bearing berries and fruits which can be used for jams, syrups, and other home uses, which was a recommendation from County Councillor Sally Povolotsky who generously allocated funding to the garden.

To get these hedges planted, along with shrubs for the woodland area, we really need your help (again!) later this month. We don't know dates yet because we have to wait for the supplier to say when they can deliver. But if you're willing and able when the time comes, please don't be shy.

Upton Nature Garden Volunteers

## **United Charities of the Ancient Parish of Blewbury**

### **CHRISTMAS IS COMING – Are you in need of some financial support??**

We are a local charity that supports people living in Blewbury, Aston Upthorpe and Upton and every Christmas we are able to provide small charitable payments to people who could benefit from a little bit of extra financial help at this time.

If you, or someone you know, is struggling with finances, for whatever reason, then please consider applying. There is a short application form which has to be completed which can either be picked up from Blewbury Post Office or requested by email to [unitedcharities@outlook.com](mailto:unitedcharities@outlook.com). Help can be provided to complete the form if necessary and all applications will be dealt with confidentially.

**Registered Charity No: 203538**

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### **Wine Club October meeting – Sparkling wines!**

If ever further proof were needed that the festive season was nearly upon us, with the nights drawing in at a rapid pace, this month's wine club enabled everyone to try a selection of sparkling wines....and maybe to find a few to get the festivities started!

Sparkling wines come from a number of regions worldwide and have many different labels, depending on the region and style of production. We were able to try many of them including champagnes, Prosecco, Cremants and English sparkling wines.

Our first wine was a Cintila Extra Dry Peninsula de Setubal NV, a wine made from Portuguese grapes, providing a wonderful buttery, creamy taste. This was well received by everyone and considered excellent value for money! If you want to know how much all the wines were and where you can buy them, please go to [www.uptonwineclub.co.uk](http://www.uptonwineclub.co.uk)

We then tasted a Prosecco from Tesco (from their Finest range). A good example of a well known wine from the Italian galera grape, produced in the northern region of Italy. Some found this a little light on taste, others loved it! It would be a good cocktail mixer if you needed sparkling wine!

Next we tried Castel faglia Franciacorta NV. Another Italian wine from the Lombardy region. This has a lively acidity with some fresh almond and aromatic aromas. Again, a lovely wine on it's own or with a starter such as smoked salmon.

We moved on to an English sparkling wine next called Prince Charmat Sparkling Brut. We tried the white but you can also get a rose. This wine comes predominantly Chardonnay grapes collected across the South of

England and then produced in West Sussex. This was very crisp with lovely fruit notes of apples and peach.

The next wine we tried was a little more well known and definitely comparable to Champagne. Another English wine, Simpsons Chalklands Classic Cuvee. A great wine with notes of caramelised pears and citrus on the nose and to taste. Just a really enjoyable wine from the UK!

We then looked at a wine from the North of France, Cave de Turkheim Cremant d'Alsace. Most of this wine is kept by the French for local consumption but 10% finds it's way out of the Alsace region and it definitely worth a try if you've not had it before.

To finish we compared a fine Champagne called Champagne Collet, Brut Vintage 2008 with another Champagne from Aldi, Champagne Veuve Monsigny Brut NV. With the first wine a little more than twice the price of the second, we were keen to see if we really could "taste the difference!" In the end it was concluded that BOTH wines were excellent. The Collet would be a brilliant alternative to some of the more well known Champagnes and the Monsigny was exceptionally good value for money!

The wine club meets every 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of the month. If you wanted to come and see what we are all about then please log on to our website and get in touch! [www.uptonwine.co.uk](http://www.uptonwine.co.uk)

Ian Langley  
Chairman

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## Didcot U3A

This month's meeting is on 16<sup>th</sup> November at the **Great Western Park District Community Centre, Gentian Mews, OX11 6GR at 2:30:pm**. The guest speaker will be Jeff Evans - 'Pop on the Box: 50 years of music on the TV'.

Submissions for Upton News should be sent to  
[neilthorp@btinternet.com](mailto:neilthorp@btinternet.com)

Deadline for the December edition is  
Friday 26th November